

REMARKS

The following is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action mailed on January 29, 2004. Claims 24-39 were examined. The Examiner rejected claims 24-27, 29, 31, 33-36, 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Ventrudo '259. The Examiner rejected claims 28, 30 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ventrudo '259 in view of Doussierre. The Examiner rejected claim 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ventrudo '259 in view of Ventrudo '119.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Examiner rejected claims 24-27, 29, 31, 33-36, 38 and 39 as anticipated by Ventrudo '259 (U.S. Patent 6,233,259). In response, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 24 recites the limitations of (i) a laser with “a gain medium optically coupled between the reflecting mirror and the output face within the cavity such that the cavity has a gain with a maximum at a wavelength λ_{\max} , when the laser is operating below threshold” and (ii) “an optical reflector defining a reflection peak coefficient at a wavelength λ that is less than the wavelength λ_{\max} by at least 10 nanometers.” Persons skilled in the art understand that when the laser is operating below threshold the gain of the cavity is distinct from the laser emission wavelength. Ventrudo teaches defining a maximum reflectivity of a grating within 10 nm of the laser emission wavelength. There is no teaching in Ventrudo of selecting the wavelength for reflection based on the gain of the cavity when the laser is operating below threshold. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 24 and claims 25-27, 29, 31, 33-36, 38 and 39 dependent thereon are in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection of these claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 28, 30 and 32 as being unpatentable over Ventrudo '259 in view of Doussierre (U.S. Patent 5,717,711), and the Examiner rejected claims 37 as being unpatentable over Ventrudo '259 in view of Ventrudo '119 (U.S. Patent 6,240,119). In response, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 28, 30, 32 and 37 are patentable over the cited references based at least on the traversal described above with respect to claim 24, upon which these claims depend. Specifically, neither Ventrudo '259, Doussierre, nor Ventrudo '119 teaches (i) a laser with “a gain medium optically coupled between the reflecting mirror and the output face within the cavity such that the cavity has a gain with a maximum at a wavelength λ_{\max} , when the laser is operating below threshold” and (ii) “an optical reflector defining a reflection peak coefficient at a wavelength λ that is less than the wavelength λ_{\max} by at least 10 nanometers.” Therefore, Ventrudo '259, Doussierre, and/or Ventrudo '119, either alone or in combination, cannot render any of claims 28, 30, 32 and 37 obvious. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejections and allowance of these claims.

Conclusion

Based on the above remarks, Applicants believe that they have overcome all of the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action mailed January 29, 2004 and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Chance E. Hardie", written over a horizontal line.

Chance E. Hardie

Registration No. 55,247

MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.

3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 1500

Houston, Texas 77056-6582

Telephone: (713) 623-4844

Facsimile: (713) 623-4846